

Looking Back

Story: Looking Back

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Summary: Three scenes of family. Rief and Nowell; Ivan and Hamma; Felix and Jenna. For the GSfest Valentine's exchange.

***Chapter 1*: Looking Back**

Title: Looking Back

Series: Golden Sun/GS: DD

Character/Pairing: pure gen. Rief and Nowell; Ivan and Hama; Felix and Jenna

Summary: three scenes of family. Rief and Nowell; Ivan and Hama; Felix and Jenna

Author's note: for the Gsfest valentine's day exchange. Each part is set in a different time, and while there's second gen, there's no real spoilers for that part.

i.

The fire is stoked, the flames burn high and bright and just keep out the winter chill. It's not even four yet, but the sun is already setting. Their mother used to tell them tales of how the sun would set for months in Imil, and then rise for months. But now, with the rising of the Golden Sun, things have almost equalized up here. It's considered 'winter' due to the daylight hours, though even during spring it doesn't thaw much. True summer is something he's only seen in books. A mythical place of flowers and trees that aren't evergreens, where the snow melts down to earth.

He's caught up in a book when she sighs. He's reading about the geological history of Weyard and the changes wrought by the Golden Sun; she's reading a romance novel.

"Don't you ever want to go out?"

He looks outside. Even inside the confines of Imil, there are large drifts of snow. The presence of Psyenergy keeps the worse of the monsters out, but it is still dreadfully cold outside.

"Not particularly," he says. "I hear it was especially chilly today. I think I'll just stay in."

Nowell lets out a growl in frustration. "Not out! *Out!*"

Rief looks up and blinks at her. For not the first time, he has no idea what she is saying. He has a feeling it's connected to mysterious men and the desire for someone to sweep her off her feet, which only confuses him further, because he does not see the appeal of banal cliches and silted dialogue.

"Clarification, please," he says.

"Don't you want to see beyond Imil?"

He looks to the large bookcases which line the room. Ever since he could read, this has been his goal. Finish these wells of knowledge, and then move on to other means. He has so far, only made it through half of one, and there are many more to be finished. Most are gifts from Kraden, or gifts sent from his godparents that are scattered around the globe. He is descended from legends. It's an odd existence, to know so intimately the tales others see so distant. He's heard of Isaac and Garet, of Jenna, Ivan, Felix, Sheba and Piers. When he relates stories he has heard about them, his mother laughs as she corrects the flaws that make them legends.

No, Isaac didn't have the strength of ten men. What would give them that idea?

If he leaves, he can't help thinking that he'll never finish this goal, and what then?

"Not quite yet. I'm still not done with these," he replies, and returns to his book.

"You're hopeless," she says. She takes up her book and moves to the other room, refusing to be with him another minute. He shrugs it off. Nowell is dramatic as ever.

ii.

Ivan isn't used to having family. Hammet and Laylana were a family of sorts, but he was still a servant. Traveling with Isaac felt like he had come to a family, but they were in truth, his first taste of true friendship.

"Close your eyes and focus," she murmurs.

He obeys. The world is turned dark, and he waits for the knowledge, the seeing Hama has, and is sure he too, will inherit. He waits, trying to keep patient despite the anxious fluttering in his chest.

He sees nothing. He focuses harder, feeling as if he is a failure of a hero, a brother and a son at this rate, and yet, nothing comes.

He isn't used to having a sister, and she isn't used to having a brother. They are awkward and filled with lost chances and memories. Sometimes she looks at him so wistful, as if her heart is filled with bygone times and what-ifs.

Ivan has been skilled at mind reading and Reveal. If anything, it now seems like performance anxiety. Here in Contigo, he is expected to be Ivan the hero, the one who brought forth the Wings Of Anemos, the one who helped save the world.

But he's just a kid, still, not even sixteen yet. He thinks Isaac was more of a hero than he'd ever be.

"It takes time," she says.

He can't tell if she means the gift of prophecy, or accustoming to a sister he has never known, and does not know to love.

iii.

His hair has come undone again. He doesn't know why he keeps it long-maybe because it irks his parents a little, and it is his one rebellion, or maybe because Jenna would cry if he ever cut it. He puts the tie in his mouth and starts a loose plait when he's interrupted by a shrill cry.

"Feli!" She calls. There's a stream of angry tears falling down her face.

"Which one was it this time?" He asks.

"Garet pulled my pigtails and said I looked like a Rat Soldier!" She twists her little face into a mask of rage, and stomps her foot.

"We can't have that. What shall it be this time? Broken bones?"

"Yes," she says, nodding very eagerly. "Lots of them."

"Which ones shall I break for hurting my sister?"

"Arms. And legs," she says. "And toes."

He frowns. "Toes too? That sounds like an awful lot of work. Especially when we could just go down to the store and buy candy..."

She brightens, completely forgetting her bruised bride.
"Candy!"

"Come on, Jennabeau. I'll carry you."

He bends down and she hops up, hooking her arms about his neck.

He knows that Gareth just has a crush on her, and would never truly hurt her—he may be a little dense, but he gets the message that Felix would have a *talk* with him, which would be scarier than the prospect of broken bones ever would be. They look up to him, he knows. He doesn't know what he's done to deserve this, except perhaps simply growing older and being larger than them. In the mirror all he sees is a quiet, sullen teen with long brown hair. There is little special about him.

"You'll never leave, right Feli?" she asks. Her head is resting against his shoulders.

Logically, he thinks, he will. One day he will die, he will have to leave the premises for something as little as firewood, and he will have already left, already broken his promise. But she's too small for such thoughts, so he says instead
"*Never.*"